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SUBJECT: BANGLADESH NOMINEES FOR PRESIDENT'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
SUMMIT

REF: STATE 112468

#### Introduction

1. Mission Dhaka welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the President's Entrepreneurship Initiative. Post's Economic Working Group will continue to explore ways to highlight the entrepreneurship objectives outlined reftel. The Ambassador discussed entrepreneurship with leading business representatives at a December 10 gathering outside of Dhaka as part of the Mission's annual "America Week," which takes the Embassy on the road to rural Bangladesh. Mission Dhaka will identify additional opportunities to engage up-and-coming businessmen and women, including through roundtables.

#### SUMMIT NOMINEES

2. Bangladesh's business community is already buzzing about the President's Entrepreneurship Summit. Bangladesh is home to many dynamic entrepreneurs, particularly social entrepreneurs, and some have already made inquiries with Post about the summit. Our top ten nominees are:

--Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Laureate and Managing Director, Grameen Bank. Grameen Bank has transformed the lives of millions of poor women in Bangladesh through micro-credit. Grameen currently has 8 million borrowers and has lent \$8 billion since its inception in the 1980s. The father of micro-credit, Professor Yunus has also pioneered the concept of social entrepreneurship. In Bangladesh, Grameen has partnered with Danone to produce high-quality, low-cost yogurt that is distributed throughout Bangladesh and has become an important dietary supplement for many rural Bangladeshis. Grameen is developing other social enterprises with multi-nationals, including Adidas.

--Annisul Huq, President, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). As Bangladesh's top business advocate, Huq has worked tirelessly to represent entrepreneurs and investors and to urge the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) to create a more credible and transparent business environment. Huq was recently elected president of South Asia's regional business chamber, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Huq played an important role in advising the GOB on its new public-private partnership initiative, which aims to leverage private investment for desperately-needed infrastructure in Bangladesh.

--Ifty Islam, Managing Partner, Asian Tiger Capital. Building on his work with Citigroup, Deutsche Bank and Merrill Lynch, Oxford-educated Islam returned to Dhaka to leverage his international connections with a view to attracting investment to Bangladesh. Islam helped develop the public-private partnership initiative unveiled by the GOB earlier this year. Islam has also acted as a catalyst for developing a Brand Bangladesh.

--Tamara Abed, Director, Aarong. Aarong is a social enterprise that employs the micro-credit beneficiaries, mostly women, of one of

Bangladesh's leading NGOs, BRAC. Some 62,000 artisans produce Aarong's many lines of Bangladesh handicrafts, including clothing, textiles, housewares, jewelry, pottery, woodwork and brassware. Abed's branding of Aarong has made it the premier department store of Bangladesh and the one-stop shop for tourists in search of Bangladeshi handicrafts.

--Kamal Quadir, CEO, CellBazaar. As CellBazaar's founder, Quadir created a cellphone-based electronic marketplace that brings together isolated buyers and sellers, eliminating the often-exploitative middleman. CellBazaar enables entrepreneurs and small businesses in Bangladesh to start and grow operations in a market that wouldn't otherwise be available in their local community, thereby creating jobs, stimulating the economy, and delivering products and services that improve the lives of millions of poor people. The CellBazaar marketplace is available to more than 25 million people in Bangladesh, including farmers who use the service to sell their harvest at fair market prices and struggling students who find and connect with tutors. Quadir was recognized by the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos as a Young Global Leader.

-- Syed Nasim Manzur, Managing Director, Apex Adelchi Footwear Limited. Apex is the largest footwear manufacturer and exporter in Bangladesh. Educated at the Wharton School of Business, Nasim is translating Bangladesh's success in the apparel industry to the leather/footwear manufacturing sector. Manzur was named one of the 200 emerging Asian leaders by the Asia Society's 2009 Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit. Nasim's Apex Group is also involved in the retail, pharmaceutical, advertising and insurance sectors. He is active in the Society for Promotion of Bangladesh Art and literacy programs.

--Kohinoor Yasmin, Executive Director, TARANGO. TARANGO (Training Assistance and Rural Advancement Non-Governmental Organization) is a social enterprise that employs some 12,000 impoverished, mostly

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rural, women to produce handbags, cosmetic bags, storage baskets, housewares and other accessories out of natural fibers and recycled materials. Started in 1989 by a German priest, TARANGO is now wholly-owned and run by Bangladeshi women. TARANGO produces goods for many top European brands, including Marks and Spencer, Pepe Jeans and the Body Shop.

--A.K.M. Fahim Mashroor, CEO, BDJOBS Ltd. Fahim founded Bangladesh's first web-based career management company, BDJOBS, in 2000. Since its inception, BDJOBS has recruited more than 100,000 professionals for more than 4,000 employers. Fahim plays a leading role in D.Net, a non-profit organization that seeks to promote information and communication technology (ICT) literacy and the use of ICT in Bangladesh's economic development. Fahim is also a leader in the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), Bangladesh's main association of information technology (IT) companies.

--Manjulika Chakma, owner, Bain Textile. Starting with less than \$5 in capital, Manjulika created a market for the handloom crafts of the Chakma ethnic group, a minority group originally from the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Bangladesh media and business groups have recognized her for pioneering work that preserves traditional handloom fabrics and fashions and creates jobs for some of Bangladesh's most underprivileged women. Manjulika works for women in small enterprise through her leadership in the Chittagong Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

--Aftab ul-Islam, President, American Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh; Chairman, Bangladesh SME Foundation; and CEO, International Office Equipment (IOE). After representing U.S. firm NCR in Bangladesh, Aftab started his own IT-related business, IOE. A lawyer and accountant, Aftab is a fervent advocate of business, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs). He is a strong supporter of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's efforts to create a Digital Bangladesh. Aftab is a member of the United Nations' Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

EMBASSY POC

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13. Mission Dhaka's point of contact for the Entrepreneurship

Initiative and Post's Economic Working Group is Deputy Pol/Econ Chief Heather Variava, who may be reached at VariavaHC@state.gov. Mission Dhaka looks forward to receiving more details about the Entrepreneurship Summit, including dates and possibilities for funding.

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